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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DEC Warns Consumers to Check Their Refrigerators Freezers for Beef *Risk of E. Coli O157:H7 Contamination*

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation is asking consumers to check their refrigerators and freezers for beef that may be tainted with E.Coli. The USDA has traced a recent outbreak in twelve states and Canada to the Nebraska Beef Co., a supplier of beef products to Kroger/Fred Meyer. The products were produced on June 17, June 24 and July 8, 2008.

Fred Meyer has initiated its own recall of the product, which has been found in Alaska. All products have been pulled from store shelves but may still be in people's refrigerators and freezers. No illnesses in Alaska have been reported.

Kroger/Fred Meyer is conducting a recall of its ground beef products in Styrofoam tray packages wrapped in clear cellophane or purchased from an in-store service counter with a sell by date of May 21 through July 5, 2008. Fred Meyer is also recalling ground beef with the "Private Selection Natural Ground Beef" label in 16 oz packages with sell by dates of July 11 through July 21, 2008. Consumers who have this beef should return it to the place of purchase for a refund. More information may be obtained directly from the USDA FSIS at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fsis_Recalls/.

Individuals who have recently eaten ground beef and experienced any of the symptoms described below should contact their physician.

E. coli O157:H7 is a potentially deadly bacterium that can cause bloody diarrhea and dehydration. The very young, seniors and persons with compromised immune systems are the most susceptible to foodborne illness and should be the most cautious.